

IN THE CLAIMS:

1-27 canceled

28. (New) A method for preparing a dry powder composition which is dispersible in an aqueous applicator the dry powder composition comprising calcium carbonate and, by weight, relative to calcium carbonate, from 4% to 11% of a polymeric binder, from 0.60% to 1.5% of a thickening agent and from 0.10% to 0.35% of a surfactant comprising the steps of:

preparing a premix comprising the surfactant, the thickening agent and a biocide/preservative; and

adding the premix to at least part of the calcium carbonate and binder.

29. (New) The method as claimed in claim 28 including the step of dry mixing at least a portion of the calcium carbonate with at least some of the binder and adding the premix to the calcium carbonate/binder mixture.

30. (New) The method as claimed in claim 28 comprising mixing approximately half of the calcium carbonate with the binder, adding the premix and subsequently adding the balance of the binder.

31. (New) The method for preparing a coating composition for application in situ to a wall formed by a number of plasterboard sections comprising the step of mixing a dry powder composition as claimed in claim 28 with water.

32. (New) The method as claimed in claim 31 wherein the dry powder composition is mixed with water in an amount of approximately 2 kg of coating composition per 1 liter of water.

33. (New) The method as claimed in claim 31 including the step of adding a pigment to the mixture.

34. (New) The method as claimed in claim 33 wherein the pigment is added in an amount of from 0.5% to 5% by weight relative to calcium carbonate.

35. (New) The method of coating a surface formed by a plurality of plasterboard sections comprising applying a coating composition as claimed in claim 28.

36. (New) The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the coating composition is applied by a spray coating technique.

37. (New) The method as claimed in claim 35 wherein the coating composition is applied by a roller technique.